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Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 35/81)



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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

IRAQ, TURKEY STRENGTHEN TIES

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 236 21-27 Aug 81 p 56

[Article: "Iraqi-Turkish Rapprochement After Signing the Economic Agreement"]

[Text] Baghdad--There is a feeling of great satisfaction prevalent in the Iraqi capital concerning the development of relations of friendship, cooperation, and good-neighborliness between Iraq and Turkey. This feeling took hold after the emergence of the agreement concerning economic, technical, and cultural cooperation which was signed by the two countries last week in Ankara, along with the protocol concerning remapping the border which was signed in connection with it.

Through this agreement the Iraqis hope to have Turkey once again be concerned with the Arab and Muslim worlds. Turkey's concern with problems in the Middle East subsided somewhat after the emergence of the military regime there about a year ago.

Mr Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolutionary Command Council and first deputy prime minister, who was the chairman of the Iraqi delegation in the Ankara talks, described the agreement as being a progressive step along the path of cooperation between the two countries.

Turkey's high officials who participated in the talks were led by the head of state, Gen Kenan Evren, and the Turkish prime minister, Bulend Ulusu. Mr Ramadan informed them that Iraq hopes that Muslim Turkey will play a more progressive role in the Palestine question. Iraqi officials hope that, in this particular realm, Turkey's solidarity with the Arabs will help to deter Israel and discourage it from engaging in aggressive adventurism in the Middle East.

Mr Ramadan explained the the high Turkish officials Iraq's position concerning its conflict with Iran, and emphasized Iraq's ardent desire to end the conflict. He told them that Iraq has no aspirations concerning Iranian territory, but that Iraq will not renounce its legitimate rights even though the war might continue for several years. He also affirmed that the Iraqi forces will withdraw whenever Iran recognizes Iraq's rights.

The Iraqis consider the new agreement to be an affirmation by the Arabs of the necessity of establishing economic and political relations with Turkey on the level of the historic and religious ties and relations which bind the Arabs and the Turks.

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The Turkish officials assured Mr Ramadan of their determination to develop their country's relations with Iraq and with the other Arab countries, and expressed their hope that the war between Iraq and Iran would end.

The protocol concerning the border included the formation of a joint committee between the two countries which will take over the task of remapping the border and fixing the demarcation lines during the next 3 years. This is to be done on the basis of the border treaty between the two countries which was signed in 1926.

Others who took part in the Iraqi delegation were Mr Tayih 'Abd al-Karim, minister of oil, and Hasan 'Ali, minister of trade.

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

IRAQ, FRG STRESS ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 236 21-27 Aug 81 p 55

[Article: "Economic Cooperation Thrives Between Iraq and West Germany"]

[Text] Baghdad--Iraq has expressed its hope that the economic cooperation between it and West Germany will continue on "a clear and firm basis of respect for each other's sovereignty, equality, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and respect for the laws in the other country."

This commentary was made by an official Iraqi source in response to a West German protest following the arrest of an Iraqi interpreter, Ya'qub Butrus, who was accompanying a West German delegation which recently paid a visit to Iraq. Butrus was charged with committing "crimes punishable by Iraqi law."

The prevailing belief here is that the incident will not constitute an obstacle to further improvement of economic cooperation between the two countries. In fact, the value of contracts which Iraq has awarded West German companies now totals about 10 billion DM. Thus Iraq has replaced Saudi Arabia as the primary market in the Middle East for West German products. The latest contract which was awarded to the West Germans is the contract which was granted to the M.A.N. Company to supply 400 large-size trucks. There was stiff competition among the companies of the Western nations to receive this contract.

These trucks will be imported for the Iraqi-Jordanian Transport Company and will be used on the road between 'Aqabah and Baghdad. The contract, which totals about 270 million DM, also includes the provision of spare parts and maintenance.

Economic relations between the two countries have undergone tremendous development since 1974, which was the year when diplomatic relations were restored between the two countries after they had been cut off for 9 years.

Two temporary crises occurred [affecting relations between the two countries]. The first one resulted in a limited cessation of awarding contracts to West German companies, the purpose being to correct the large gap in balance of trade in favor of West Germany. The second one resulted in the West German Hermes Insurance Company refusing to insure West German companies operating in Iraq. This happened shortly after the outbreak of the conflict with Iran. But in spite of this, mutual cooperation and exchange have once again reached a high point at the present time.

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Between last December and last April, West German companies were awarded contracts worth about 4.5 billion DM. The West Germans are interested in participating in the implementation of public service projects such as those concerning the building of roads, dams, and those having to do with the automobile and cement industries.

The Iraqis are interested in obtaining advanced West German technology. However, they are complaining about the fact that West Germany is not buying very much Iraqi oil and thus is not helping to eliminate the large deficit in balance of trade payments between the two countries.

Economic cooperation between Iraq and West Germany has been thriving ever since the latest visit to Bonn which was made by Mr Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolutionary Command Council and first deputy prime minister, and Mr Hasan 'Ali, minister of trade.

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

IRAQI, EGYPTIAN AUTO VENTURES--The Arab World is looking with special interest toward establishing automobile industries, aimed at saving large amounts of hard currency, which it spends annually to import thousands of trucks and automobiles, as well as to ensure work for the domestic workforce. Currently in the Arab World, Iraq and Egypt are the most interested in establishing a domestic industry for automobiles. Iraq intends to spend about \$5 billion to establish this important industry. Production of trucks should begin in 1985, when annual production, after a short period of time, should reach 25,000 vehicles. In the past week, Egypt signed a basic contract with the Daimler-Benz company to build an automobile production complex in the city of Tenth of Ramadhan, which is considered one of Cairo's suburbs. The value of the contract is about \$22 million. [Text] [Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 234, 7-13 Aug 81 p 53] /COPYRIGHT: 1981 AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI/ 7005

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PERSIAN GULF AREA

REASONS FOR SOUTH KOREAN CONTRACTS DISCUSSED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 235, 14-20 Aug 81 p 53

[Article: "Eight Billion Dollars Worth of Contracts to South Korea in 1981"]

[Text] Riyadh--The success of South Korean companies in getting contracts and implementing construction and road-building projects in the Arab Gulf countries is considered to be an indication that a Third-World country is capable of competing with the advanced countries in the international market if it makes the effort, demonstrates perseverance, shows determination, and knows what fields it can specialize in.

Although the Arab Gulf countries complain about the foreign labor force which threatens to have negative influences on the structure of their Arab society, these countries nevertheless find themselves compelled, because of the urgency of their development programs and their lack of a skilled domestic and Arab labor force, to draw upon the help of Korean companies which have demonstrated their efficiency in carrying out projects and their excellent workmanship.

Probably the first South Korean company which began operating in Saudi Arabia was the Sam Hwan Company about 10 years ago. Although this company carried out a road-building project which was not financially profitable for it, this did pave the way for the company to conclude other deals and engage in other projects which brought the company ample profits later on.

South Korean companies are considered to be the most successful foreign companies operating in the Middle East in the field of contract work, construction, and road-building. The Haeunda Company is one of the foremost contracting companies in the world.

Unofficial estimates indicate that South Korea currently occupies sixth place among the countries which engage in projects and are awarded contracts in the Arab Gulf countries. For example, in 1979 Korean companies were awarded contracts worth \$6.5 billion--out of a total of \$40 billion worth of contracts awarded in the Arab countries. It is believed that this figure has already gone up to \$8 billion this year.

Saudis and Gulf Arabs have no explanation for this Korean phenomenon other than the fact that it demonstrates the vitality of these companies which possess an organized, disciplined, trained, skilled labor force which is also perhaps relatively cheap.

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The Koreans depend on using their heads in order to get contracts. For example, they do not compete with Japanese, American, and European companies in an effort to get contracts which require advanced technology. But they do enter into alliances and partnerships with these companies in order to carry out the construction jobs which these projects require such as building plants--including parts and stages of buildings which constitute steel, petrochemical, and water desalinization plants.

Nevertheless, Korean companies have started to face stiff competition due to the fact that the Gulf countries are anxious to acquire advanced technology and skills in the projects which they entrust foreign companies with the job of implementing. There has also been a decrease in allocation for construction projects in the Gulf development plans generally. The decrease has been from 24 percent in the seventies to 14 percent in the first half of the eighties. Furthermore, the wages of Korean workers have gone up and workers from Bangladesh and India have begun to compete with them.

It has also happened that several South Korean companies have suffered bankruptcy and financial difficulties while carrying out projects in the region. An example of this is the (Shin Supung) Company which was implementing projects in Kuwait and Jordan worth \$170 million.

South Korean embassies, which look after the interests of these companies and their workers in Saudi Arabia and in the Gulf countries, say that the Korean government has established a capital fund amounting to \$500 million to encourage their companies to change over from using intensive labor to using advanced technology. These embassies are also calling upon the companies to work together with local companies, as stipulated by the new regulations in the Gulf countries and in order to facilitate the process of getting contracts.

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IRAQ

U.S. NEUTRALITY TOWARDS IRAN-IRAQ WAR QUESTIONED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 234, 7-13 Aug 81 pp 33-34

[Article: "The Principle of America's 'Non-Alignment': 'Washington Wants a War in Which Iran Cannot Win and Iran Cannot Lose' "]

[Text] Iraqi doubts about American "neutrality" in the Iraqi-Iranian war go back sometime before the disclosure of the Argentinian airplane. However, the real Iraqi scorn is directed against Teheran's "Arabs", who put their "weight" and rested their hopes on supporting Iran against Iraq. We ask them: What do they think, now, about Iran's "good intentions," after the evidence of Israeli-Iranian cooperation.

The Israeli-Iranian arms deal did not surprise Baghdad. Information from various sources had reached the Iraqi capital, confirming the existence of Iranian-Israeli cooperation in providing spare parts and ammunition for the American weapons, which Iran owns.

Baghdad was never reluctant to express its suspicions regarding this relationship. Its voice was constantly raised, accusing the Americans of standing behind this criminal relationship. Some doubters among the Arabs accused Baghdad, privately or openly, of exaggeration or of not complying with the facts and with objectivity, regarding its accusations against the "Islamic religious regime" in Teheran.

Iraqi suspicions, regarding the American role, reached their peak during the final stage of the negotiations over the American hostages. Baghdad believed that the deal included, as one of its points, exchanging the hostages for weapons, through a third party, which would have been Israel or someone else. In a letter to the UN special committee for Palestinian rights, on the day of world solidarity with the Palestinians which was celebrated at the end of last year, President Saddam Husayn said: "Once again we find the United States helping this country, Iran, which has waged aggression against our land and our people for 2 years. This is what forced us to defend our rights, our nation, and the security of our citizens." It is no secret that the suspicions regarding the American position formed one of the reasons, which prevented and continues to prevent the resumption of diplomatic relations between Iraq and the United States, which have been severed for nearly 14 years. This is in addition to the basic reason, which is that there has been no noticeable change in America's biased position towards Israel and Zionism, and against the Arabs and their basic issue of Palestine.

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All this bolstered the Iraqi suspicions, in addition to all the information received about the Iranian-Israeli connection, with American approval. The clincher was the American press campaign, in particular, and that of the Western media in general, against Iraq in an attempt to distort its victories and image in the military confrontation with Iran. Such distortions continued even at the height of the American-Iranian dispute over the seizure of the hostages. The least that the American correspondents, journalists and analysts said was that Iraq was the "surrogate" of Russia in the war with Iran.

American diplomacy did not resituate from whispering in Baghdad's ear, through its Arab and non-Arab channels, that the United States stood neutral regarding the Iraqi-Iranian conflict, but American neutrality always seemed, in Baghdad's view, to be mere words, with no basis in fact.

Washington: Tactics and Strategy

One could say that the U.S. Strategy, which has been based on exploiting the Iranian attack against Iraq, from the early days of the revolution until now, and which has been carried on behalf of American interests in the region, has not changed. However, the tactics have varied and fluctuated, depending on the circumstances of the conflict.

During the first stage of the armed conflict, the U.S. [hiding their true convictions] tried to appear as being understanding of the reasons, which led Iraq to respond to the Iranian attacks.

In the second stage, after Iraq's military superiority became clear, American logic began to take on the appearance of "non-alignment" with respect to either side. However, at the same time, Washington was using Iraqi victories, and Iranian threats against the Gulf states, to "frighten" those states away from the combatant parties: from Saddam Husayn and from Khomeyni.

It used the defiance and excessive tactics of the Iranian revolution's attacks against Iraq and the Gulf Arabs, on the one hand, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, on the other, as justification for building up its armed presence in the region, on the pretext of protecting the oil and the lines of navigation. With its allies, it built up a vast fleet of 60 ships, in the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the entrance to the Gulf. It concluded an agreement to establish bases or facilities for its forces in Somalia, Kenya, Oman and Egypt. It philosophized all this with the Carter doctrine, which came into being in the early 1980's, and which was tantamount to reinstituting the Eisenhower doctrine, and the theory of "filling the vacuum," of the 1950's.

As for the third stage in the U.S. tactic, it began with the freeing of the hostages. It was manifested in a tendency to bolster and support the Khomeyni regime, on the basis that he had corrected his mistake, and that there was no longer any justification for incompatibility of interests between Washington and Teheran.

During this stage, the Iraqis began to notice that something was going on between Iran and Israel, and that Iran had resumed nibbling at the forbidden Israeli apple, despite all its Arab and Islamic slogans that it had raised, and that Washington was not far from reopening the channels between the two countries.

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On the contrary, Washington used some of its Arab friends to persuade Iraq not to prepare a military campaign to liberate the three Arab islands in the Straits of Hormuz, which Iran had forcibly seized from the United Arab Emirates in 1971. It alluded to the use of force to defeat the Iraqi campaign, on the pretext that carrying the war to the southern Gulf would threaten the oil shipping lanes.

Later it became evident that Washington had obtained, in one way or another, a "gentleman's agreement" from Iran not to shell the Straits of Hormuz, in exchange for preventing Iraq's liberation of the three islands.

Now, after having confined the flames of war to the upper Gulf, and the United States having made sure that it did not spread to other oil wells in the region, or to the Straits of Hormuz, it became evident, through increased infiltration of American spare parts, weapons and ammunition to Iran, through Israel or some other country, that it wanted to prolong the war, or as a senior Iraqi official told me, "the United States wants a war that Iraq cannot win and Iran cannot lose."

The Iraqi View of the American Position

The Iraqi view of the American position, before and after the disclosure of the recent Israeli-American deal, can be summarized to the effect that the United States does not want Saddam Husayn to stand alone in a prominent and powerful role in the region.

This view concentrates on two matters: the first is America's covert and overt diplomatic and military activities in the region, and the second is Saddam Husayn's policy, which displeases the strategic planners in Washington. He insists on his complete independence, and on the right of the Arabs and the nations of the region to make their political decisions themselves, in accordance with their national and pan-Arab interests. He rejects the international polarization, represented by the buildup of the U.S. military presence in and around the Gulf region. Further, he is opposed to Camp David, and has barred Sadat from the role given him to carry out in the Gulf, after his role ended in the confrontation with Israel.

Iraqi suspicions regarding the hidden American role in the Israeli bombing of the Iraqi nuclear facilities are incorporated into the framework of this view: Namely the United States, whether it encouraged Israel, or supplied it with the necessary information, or not, does not want the Iraqis to realize their high aspirations through internal stability, economic prosperity, and victory on the field of battle.

The strange thing is that the Soviets, whose international interests are totally incompatible with American interests, have found themselves captive of American logic in dealing with Iraq, at one of the stages of the Iraqi-Iranian war. They expressed their annoyance at the strong Iraqi response to Iranian armed intervention along their borders, and, for not too short a period of time, they stopped fulfilling the contracts to supply arms. Perhaps they even encouraged Libya and Syria to offer aid and assistance to Iran.

Whatever the case might be, what one hears constantly in Baghdad is that Iraqi policy will not be changed, whether by positions of the United States or the Soviet Union, and Baghdad will continue to call on the region to adhere to an independent Arab line, because that is the only way to safeguard Arab interests, and to keep the region free of the international polarization.

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If Iraq had dealt with the facts and the reality of the international situation as it is, it would not have gone on record, when the Foreign Ministry summoned Barbara Bowdin, an official of the U.S. interests section in the Belgian Embassy, with either its protest or its complaints about the increased flow of American weapons into Iran, through Israel or through world black market channels. It would have seen that it must stop here to hold accountable Teheran's "Arabs", who have moved heaven and earth [became furious], when Iraq forcibly responded to the new Persian regime's attempts to attack Iraq, interfere in its internal affairs, and threaten the Arabism of the Gulf.

Iraq did not need the disclosure of the Argentinian aircraft to confirm the truth and integrity of its position regarding Iran, or to convince Teheran's "Arabs" to refrain from continuing to support Iran at the expense of their brotherly relations with Iraq. There was a great deal of evidence, prior to the aircraft [incident], to the effect that Khomeyni Iran's support for the Arab issues does not go beyond mere words and propaganda, neither hindering nor advancing them. The painful thing is that Teheran's "Arabs" no longer remember their Arabism, except for their language for which they are laughed at in the service of Persian barbarism.

What Happened to Abu Walid in Teheran

It is sufficient here to point out what happened to the Palestinians. The PLO trained the nucleus of the revolutionary guard, who today are charged with protecting the Iranian regime. The Palestinians tried to be the spokesman of the Iranian revolution in the Gulf and elsewhere, or rather, some in the PLO thought so highly of the Khomeyni regime's "intentions" that such views reached the point of disagreement and rupture with Baghdad.

When the decisive hour came, the Khomeyni regime denied the PLO, in the person of its leader Yasser 'Arafat, a golden opportunity to reap international diplomatic and propaganda value, when Khomeyni persistently rejected his earnest requests to hand the hostages over to the PLO, so that it could carry out negotiations with Washington. That would have been the occasion to force the U.S. into a direct dialogue with the PLO, to recognize it, and to void Kissinger's pledge to Israel in 1975 not to conduct this dialogue with the PLO before its recognition of the Zionist state.

Abu Walid, a senior officer in the Palestinian command, went himself to Teheran to renew 'Arafat's efforts, by virtue of the fact that he had supervised the training of the Iranian "fedayeen" in the past. It was a surprise to him when they rebuked the PLO, because Zahdi al-Turazi, its representative at the UN, had said that the Palestinians would act as mediators to solve the hostage crisis.

The second shock was that Khomeyni refused to receive him. Then, Abol Hassan Bani Sadr received him. At that time, he was acting foreign minister. He told him that the Iranians were shocked, because the Palestinians were interfering in an internal matter on behalf of the U.S.

Abu Walid replied that the Palestinians' goal was to serve the Iranian revolution, and pointed out to him that the seizure of the hostages, and the occupation of the U.S. embassy building, were not benefiting the revolution. He warned him that the United States might use those two things as justification for occupying the Gulf.

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Despite all this, Teheran's "Arabs" have not ceased the "jihad" on the side of Iran. It could be understood, for example, why the Syrian regime offers assistance to Iran, on the basis of the proverb, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend," i.e., its hatred of the Ba'thist regime in Iraq. However, it is not understandable, for example, that the Libyan regime should show such increasing enthusiasm for financing and arming Iran, and should have adopted some of those who are outside of the law, like Barzani's supporters.

There might be a "connection" which President al-Qadhafi suddenly discovered, that he thought would unite himself and Khomeyni, as a motive for his enthusiasm. But what is his view today, regarding the compelling, decisive and definite evidence of the arms "connection" that has been planted for the Khomeyni regime in Israel?

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LIBYA

ITALIAN PAPER CITES LIBYAN AGENCY ON TIES

PM151503 Milan CORRIERE DELLA SERA in Italian 11 Sep 81 p 15

[Unattributed report: "Al-Qadhdhafi Backtracks with Italian Ambassador"]

[Text] Tripoli--JANA has issued a note concerning a meeting between al-Qadhdhafi and the Italian, Turkish, Spanish and Greek ambassadors. The main topic of the document is the interpretation of the 1 September speech in which the Libyan leader threatened, among other things, to attack Sicily in the event of further incidents with the United States in the Gulf of Sirte.

The JANA note states that there is a "defamatory campaign" against the Jamahiriyah, that is, the Libyan People's Republic.

"This campaign," the document states, "has been mounted by the U.S. administration through its propaganda means and through the various reactionary rightwing press organs with the aim of distorting the Libyan stance and upsetting and damaging the relations of friendship that bind Libya to the friendly Mediterranean countries. This campaign has been furthered by spreading a false interpretation of the content of the speech which the leader of the revolution delivered on the 12th anniversary of the 1 September Revolution.

"The ambassadors of the four friendly countries," the note continues, "agreed in their statements released following their meeting with the leader of the revolution. They said that their countries refuse to accept any aggressive U.S. stance with respect to the Jamahiriyah. They added that their countries will not permit the United States to use their territory for any aggressive action against Libya.

"The Italian, Turkish, Spanish and Greek ambassadors said that their countries will not sacrifice their interests and historical and civilized relations with Libya for President Reagan's sake. The ambassadors stressed that their government leaders assess their relations with Libya positively and safeguard these relations for the sake of mutual interests and for the evolution of their interests with Libya."

"The statements by those countries' ambassadors," the note continues, "were made to reject all the accusations and false claims circulated by the U.S. administration and by the interpretations of the rightwing newspapers within the sphere of influence of the United States and its security services."

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The Libyan note accuses LA REPUBBLICA, among others, of reporting "false statements" and asserts that "the daily CORRIERE DELLA SERA has published a speech by the Italian defense minister containing direct threats against Libya.

"A statement by the Italian Government," the note adds, "reports an anza version of an official communique, according to which the Italian Government has expressed its desire to pursue a policy of stability and peace in the Mediterranean region in cooperation with all the littoral states.

"Moreover, Italian Foreign Minister Emilio Colombo said in an interview broadcast on Italian television Channel Two that there is no crisis between Italy and Libya, adding that we refuse, despite the disturbances in the Mediterranean, to describe them as a crisis."

"Apart from the official Italian statements, which point to the rejection of all U.S. pressures to damage relations with Libya and falsify Libya's stances in its legitimate right to defend its people's freedom against U.S., zionist and reactionary imperialist attacks, the Italian people's masses," the Libyan note continues, "have expressed their stable and independent stance with respect to the patent U.S. interventions, rejecting the attempts to destroy the relations of mutual interest and the historical relations with the Jamahiriyah."

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LIBYA

BRIEFS

DESALINATION, POWER PLANTS--Libya has commissioned the German-Swiss Brown-Boveri Cie. to implement a contract to expand a power station in Tubruq, on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. The contract is valued at 200 million West German marks. Work will be completed by the middle of 1984, and the power output will be increased to 260 megawatts. Libya concluded a similar contract, 3 months ago, with the same firm to expand a generating station in Darnah. The two plants will produce electrical energy and desalinate sea water, in order to meet the needs of the developing industrial area in North East Libya. [Text] [Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 236, 21-27 Aug 81 p 55] 7005 [COPYRIGHT: 1981 AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI]

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SAUDI ARABIA

IMPLICATIONS OF NEUMANN'S RESIGNATION DISCUSSED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 234 7-13 Aug 81 p 22

[Article: "The First Victim of the AWACS Deal: Robert Neumann Resigned in the South of Lebanon"]

[Text] The replacement of the U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia was not an innocuous decision. The removal of Robert Neumann, one of President Reagan's closest associates, is considered to be a concession on the part of the White House in an issue which is closely connected with America's stumbling around in its dealings with the hot situation in the Middle East. Exactly what is this concession?

Washington--Last 20 July the phone rang in Senator Charles Percy's office in Washington. The person on the other end of the line was Robert Neumann, U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia and an old friend of Percy. He asked him: "Did you watch TV yesterday? I heard Haig's statements, and believe me he made me want to vomit." Neumann continued talking, not knowing that what he was saying would be used as a pretext, a few days later, to force him to resign from his position.

Neumann was recalled from Riyadh to Washington early last month after the White House had made an "internal decision" to propose to Congress the sale of AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia next September. Since the White House knows that those members of Congress who oppose the plan are gathering their forces in order to defeat it and prevent the deal from taking place, Neumann was recalled so that he could make a number of contacts with these members of Congress in an effort to convince them of the necessity of selling the AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia.

When he arrived in Washington it was clear to him that his task would involve numerous difficulties. Relations between the ambassador and his direct superior, Secretary of State Alexander Haig, had never been good. Neumann had occupied the position of foreign affairs adviser in Reagan's transition team, and after Reagan's victory he was appointed head of the "transition team" in the Department of State. This team was entrusted with the task of examining the policies of the old administration, rendering an opinion concerning them, and then incorporating these policies into the work of the new administration.

When Reagan announced his choice of Gen Alexander Haig to occupy the position of secretary of state in the new administration, Neumann felt that the efforts of the transition team were in danger [of being in vain]. Haig did not support the "policy" which he had adopted and which he had expressed during Reagan's election campaign and when the new government was taking over its functions--particularly in the Department of State.

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One of the most important differences between the two men concerns U.S. strategy with regard to the Gulf. Neumann is in favor of developing relations between the U.S. and the Arabs and disregarding Israel's reservations concerning this matter. Haig is in favor of continuing the policy of the "critical balance" between the Arabs and the Israelis, guaranteeing that the Israelis will have the upper hand to some degree or other.

When the situation in the Middle East exploded after the events which took place starting this summer, it became clear that the differences between the two men would lead them to a parting of the ways similar to that of a divorce. After the bombing of the Israeli nuclear reactor, Neumann pointed out that it was necessary for the U.S. to reconsider supplying Israel with F-16 planes, whereas Haig, after the raid, announced that delivery of the planes to Israel would be resumed after a "temporary delay." Then came Menachem Begin's victory in the Israeli Knesset elections, which was followed by the savage attacks on Lebanon, and all of this made Neumann even firmer in his stand.

The former ambassador said that the U.S. had more than one good reason to review its policy with regard to Israel. But Haig, in the television program which Neumann referred to in his telephone conversation with Percy, stated that he refused to link the delivery of the F-16 planes to Israel's raids against Lebanon, and he reaffirmed that these were two separate matters.

After that the White House made the decision to suspend the shipment of the airplanes to Israel. Neumann said that the secretary of state did not mean what he said, and pointed out that the White House's decision contradicted the opinions which Haig had expressed during ABC's television program "Issues and Answers" on the evening of 19 July.

Neumann told many of his friends who were members of Congress that it was necessary to quickly reevaluate American policy in the Middle East before it was too late for Washington. He added that the real obstacle to accomplishing this was not in the Congress, but rather "in the Department of State"—a reference to Alexander Haig.

On 23 July, after Haig had gathered together sufficient evidence that Neumann "was putting the secretary of state publicly in a bad light," he summoned him to his office in Washington in order to confront him with this evidence. A number of Neumann's friends have said that the meeting was a stormy one. Haig suggested that the real reason for Neumann's acrimonious remarks was the fact that the ambassador aspired to occupy a position more important than that of ambassador to Saudi Arabia in the Department of State, and that perhaps he aspired to occupy the position of secretary of state itself. But Neumann insisted that the real reason for his remarks was the policy of the Department of State and that he refused to allow the matter to be transformed into a "clash of personalities."

These are the interpretations which the two men have presented concerning their differences. However, rumors which have gone around government offices in Washington after Neumann announced his decision to resign have tended to explain things quite differently.

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Israeli Condition?

One of these "unofficial" interpretations says that Neumann's dismissal was one of the conditions set by Begin before he would stop his raids into Lebanon and observe the cease-fire. The basis of this interpretation is that, before Neumann was dismissed, he was active in trying to push the AWACS deal through Congress and this is what led the Israeli prime minister to demand his dismissal.

This unofficial interpretation goes on to say that Begin's demand was indirectly welcomed by Haig who already knew the nature of the criticisms which his ambassador in Riyadh was directing against him.

There is also another "unofficial" interpretation which says that the strong opposition among the White House staff to Haig's policies led the secretary of state to fear that the White House staff would "polish up" Neumann's image in preparation for the time when Haig would be resigning--and it was believed that this time was not far away.

It has been confirmed that, during the last few days before he was dismissed, Neumann was saying that the secretary of state's principal concern was to prepare for the coming presidential elections which he intended to enter, and that this was precisely the thing that caused him (that is, Haig) to hesitate to take a decisive position with regard to Israel since he desired to maintain good relations with the Zionist pressure groups in Washington.

The important thing is that, after the 23 July meeting between Haig and Neumann, the secretary of state made a direct request from the President to give him "a free hand" to deal with his rebellious ambassador. Haig succeeded in receiving this authorization after he convinced Reagan that differences between the Department of State and one of its ambassadors concerning such a sensitive position could paralyze the effectiveness of American foreign policy.

After that one of Haig's aides got in touch with the ambassador and informed him that the secretary of state felt that it would be better for him to submit his resignation. Then he explained to him that the secretary of state had received authorization from above to do what he wanted.

It should be noted here that Reagan apparently is determined to continue the game of balancing people off against each other inside his administration. The dispute between Haig and the White House staff is growing, and the atmosphere is growing heavier with each new crisis which the Reagan administration faces. However, the President is always careful to compensate one faction for any gain which is achieved by the other faction. The matter here goes beyond personal considerations. Reagan knows that his administration will be in a very critical position if he disregards the alliances between the huge American establishment groups which are represented in his administration. He realizes that the differences between Haig and Weinberger, for example, are not personal differences as much as they are tactical differences between the institutions which each of the two men represents. Thus if he decided the dispute in favor of either one or the other person, such a decision would go beyond personal considerations and would involve political considerations--considerations in which any internal disorder could make it more difficult to formulate "American policy."

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The unfortunate thing is that the continuation of this dichotomy within the American administration also makes it more difficult to formulate American policy. Proof of this is the absence of a definite U.S. position with regard to the Middle East. This absence of a position is the thing that, up till lately, Menachem Begin has been able to profit from and which has led the U.S. itself to be at the top of the list of the victims.

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SUDAN

AL-SHARIF AL-HINDI ON OPPOSITION PLANS, IMPENDING UPRISING

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 233, 31 Jul-6 Aug 81 p 38-39

[Interview with al-Sharif al-Hindi, leader of the Sudanese Opposition, by Ahmad Hafez: "The Sudanese Regime is the Fourth Partner in 'Camp David'" in London, date not specified]

[Text] Al-Sharif Husayn al-Hindi (58 years old) is the senior leader of the opposition political parties in Sudan, and their most influential and ambitious. He alone among the national leaders has rejected conciliation. He insists on rebuilding a more democratic, just and economically developed Sudan. AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI met with him in London, and interviewed him concerning his future endeavors, and the regime's troubles.

[Question] Why are you in opposition from London? Would it not be more appropriate for you, a historic party leader, to be there in Sudan, among those members of your party that are fighting?

[Answer] Opposition from abroad was not something we invented. It is a recognize method all over the world, and throughout history. Emigre opposition began during the time of the Prophet Muhammad, when he and his followers fled to Christian Ethiopia, to avoid the injustice and oppression of the Mecca unbelievers. The Islamic call was spread by the emigres abroad, and the supporters at home. Karl Marx did not set foot in Leningrad until the revolution was successful. [sic] What I wish to stress is that all liberating forces began with work abroad, coupled with action at home, in continuous coordination. That is the course of world struggle, of which we consider ourself one supporter. Our presence abroad allows us to:

*Report our case on the international level, and to inform all the world of the Sudanese regime's worsening practises against the people of Sudan.

*Support, materially and morally, the opposition forces at home. We now have armed organizations, trained on the latest weapons, based in the various remote areas of Sudan. We have our organized political cells, which the regime cannot get at. That could not be done, were it not for the leadership's freedom of movement, which would not be in our power, if we had remained inside Sudan, where it would be easy to find us and throw us into the darkness of prison.

*We have been able to gain material and political support from politically liberated nations and organizations, through tireless contacts that we are making from our exile abroad.

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Economic Bankruptcy

[Question] Exactly what do you have against the Sudanese regime?

Let us begin on the domestic level.

[Answer] Are you prepared to write a large volume? Am I going to be able to dictate it to you in one sitting?

[Question] A volume, no...we have room for the simple facts.

[Answer] You have permission to record.

There is police rule in the Sudan today, in collusion with a group of rulers who dominate the country's assets. There are 20 million Sudanese people, but only a small group of individuals of the armed forces, some high-ranking officers in the police force, and a handful of militia own the decision-making power, own everything. The majority are isolated; they are the Sudanese people, in most of its classes. Twenty million Sudanese are losing the simplest necessities of a proper social life. Their incomes are insufficient to cover 20 percent of their expenses. The Sudanese people are in a state of political and economic subjugation. The economy is facing bankruptcy; it exists on loans. This means the deterioration of the Sudanese pound's purchasing power. Today it is 10 percent of what it was in 1968. Prices have risen 12 times over their level of 10 years ago. Inflation continues its frightening escalation.

Prior to May 1979, there was not a single millionaire in Sudan. Today, there are millionaires by the scores, or rather, hundreds, while the Treasury is facing a disgraceful deficit, and is printing banknotes without production or gold cover. All social services are non-existent. There are many sick who cannot find treatment, or a bed in a hospital. There are many of school age who cannot find a seat in school, or a book. In a word, I can say that Sudan is starving today, its body broken. The regime is trying to cover up this tragic condition.

[Question] What about the domestic political situation?

[Answer] Clearly the regime has tied itself to the defeatist, capitulationist, political and imperialist circle. The regime's leaders are the only ones in the Arab World who publically approved of the Camp David agreement. They were not even content with that. On the contrary, they signed with Sadatist Egypt a mutual defense treaty, and the so-called economic integration, which is a meaningless phrase. Let us not forget the statement of the Sudanese president about his readiness to establish foreign American bases, "whether by leasing or lending or sale, or even as a gift."

It is a policy of isolation from the Arab Community, and its pan-Arab concerns. The minimum requested is condemnation of Camp David, and adherence to the Khartoum conference's four "noes." This is support for the Arab policy against the Zionist enemy.

Accordingly, we consider the Sudanese regime to be the Egyptian regime's partner in damaging the Palestinian case. It is the one who expelled the PLO publically,

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and in front of the entire Arab World. It locked up its offices in Khartoum, as if the Palestinian right was a rejected matter!

[Question] But don't we clearly see the intent of the Egyptian-Israeli partnership?

[Answer] The imperialist plot begins in the Bosphorus, passing through the Suez Canal and penetrates Sudan. The plan calls for the seizure of the Red Sea, and the establishment of military bases in its ports. Sudan participates in the so-called Nile Basin nations' conference. It is a conference aimed ultimately at channeling the Nile waters to the Negev Desert. The Israelis, therefore, will have achieved a part of their Old Testament dream, "Our land, O Israel, from the Nile...to the Euphrates."

Then, there is the war now going on in Lebanon, and the fact of the partition there, the plan of the Maronite state, and the daily annihilation of the Palestinian people, all of this, inter-connected links of the basic conspiracy.

[Question] Inasmuch as the Sudanese regime is this isolated, how do you explain the fact that it stays in power?

[Answer] All I can say is that the Sudanese national popular movement and the Sudanese opposition together, from 1960 until now, have carried out numerous military, quasi-military, popular, student, trade-unionist and farmer uprisings. A year does not pass but the regime faces from the Sudanese opposition a series of violent movements.

This year, Sudan experienced the famous Darfur uprisings, when the entire province was engulfed in civil disobedience. The masses there seized all parts of the province, and many martyrs fell. Then, the total uprising followed in the province of Kordofan, in which cars belonging to the so-called Socialist Union were burned, and its offices destroyed. The people seized the province's capital, and the rest of the regional cities. After that came the railroad workers' uprising, which is the nerve system of transportation in vast and huge Sudan. The railway workers stood firm in the face of fire, weapons, and the heavily-armed security forces, which dragged citizens from their homes, and locked up their livestock, and used the vilest forms of oppression and terror. Nevertheless, the workers stood steadfast, demonstrating their courage with incidents that stunned the entire world, and they are still steadfast. They were followed, in several movements, by the rest of the trade unionists, despite the laws in Sudan forbidding strikes, and imposing execution as punishment. I can say that all of this continues, and that popular uprisings prevail in all parts of Sudan. Although they have not exploded in a total and collective sense, that is attributable to other reasons, for which a solution must be found in the very near future. However, the revolution is now located in the hearts of the Sudanese.

When Does the Explosion Come?

[Question] What are these reasons?

[Answer] First, let me assure you that the total explosion of the revolution is only a few months away. As regards the reasons which you want to know, I shall summarize them as follows:

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1. The Sudanese popular opposition is not only directed against the Sudanese regime itself, but against all those things that stir up the Sudanese people in various and sundry forms. All of this has hastened Sadat and his allies to suppress this revolution. You must have heard of the recent meeting which President Numayri held with officers of the armed forces of various ranks, after his trip to Egypt, and the meeting with President Sadat in Aswan. He asked for more Egyptian forces to be sent. Squadrons of Egyptian aircraft are still based inside Sudan, at Nasser airbase and Jabal al-Awliya. There are in fact, trained and armed soldiers among those Egyptians living among the population. They are dressed in civilian clothes, and circulate among the citizens.

[Question] Do you consider President Numayri's desire to resign to be true, or merely a maneuver?

[Answer] It is theatrical. President Numayri gathered together the officers of the armed forces; he told them that he was resigning, and asked for their views. He asked them: "Shall I hand over power to civilians or to military?" Their collective reply was that they had not participated a single day in governing, and that the political apparatus of the Socialist Union was responsible for the failure of the regime in dealing with economic and social crises. Numayri left this meeting furious. When the officers insisted on meeting with him again, he told them again that he would resign next September. Nevertheless, the opposition, along with the armed forces, does not believe a single word of what he said.

The gravity of what is happening in Sudan becomes clear, when we are aware that President Numayri will be sending a military delegation to Washington, headed by his deputy, the commander in chief of the armed forces, 'Abd al-Majid Khalil, to meet with the American Secretary of Defense. Numayri has entrusted the Egyptian President, during his forthcoming visit to London on 2 August, to discuss on his behalf a formula for coordination with NATO leaders. He personally will go to Washington, after Sadat's trip, and before Menachem Begin arrives. The conspiracy, in some of its aspects, in fact begins with the second meeting, which took place in Athens, between Mahghoub Sulayman, minister of state for media affairs, in the Office of the Presidency, and General Sharon, the Israeli minister of agriculture. The contacts continue, through the Israeli ambassador in Cairo, Moisha Shasun, who is, coincidentally, a Jew of Sudanese origin, who previously worked in the post of directory of the Khartoum municipality. He is married to the daughter of the previous rabbi of Jews in Sudan. He could be considered an expert in Sudanese affairs.

Therefore, you can see that the Sudanese opposition does not only face the Sudanese regime itself, but also the Egyptian regime, Washington, Tel Aviv, and those who spin in the American-Zionist orbit.

We Are Allied with All

[Question] What is your position regarding the rest of the Sudanese opposition groups?

[Answer] I want to emphasize that the Sudanese opposition encompasses the entire Sudanese region, against the ruling regime, with its various identities and backgrounds. It is a broad and comprehensive opposition; no one can isolate a single Sudanese citizen from this opposition. I mean that the Sudanese opposition had gone beyond the political framework, and has become a collective masses opposition.

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Accordingly, defining the framework for the popular opposition is only a part of the definition. The Sudanese popular opposition, with its allies and brothers in combat, encompasses the entire Sudanese people, representing them fully.

Our party, the Democratic Union, is one of the major leaders of this opposition, since it began to oppose the regime only hours after its establishment on 25 May 1979. It has not concluded a truce; it has not ceased to fight for one hour. It still insists on not participating with, nor negotiating with, nor reconciling with this regime. It will not be content until the regime is completely eliminated. It will stand against any regime, whether military or civilian, that succeeds it, and will only accept complete public freedoms and democracy, a revolutionary rule of law, independence of the judiciary, and full, democratic popular representation of the masses of the Sudanese people.

Standing with the Democratic Union Party in these trenches are the Arab Socialist Ba'thist Party (Sudanese Region), the Sudanese progressives, in their various forms, and the over-whelming majority of the al-Ansar, with their leader, "the absent Imam" al-Hadi al-Mahdi, as well as the Southern opposition in its various organizations.

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